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ACT I

Scene 1

The Great Room (Kitchen) of the Thompson-Neely House, near Coryell's Ferry on the west bank of the Delaware, just northeast of Bowman's Hill. It is an evening in December, 1776. A great hearth dominates the room, center, rear. A large oak table stands to the left of the fireplace. At the left end of the room a cherry pewter cupboard gleams against the white-washed wall. On its shelves are the most frequently used kitchen utensils and a few prized pewter pieces, plates, teapot, mug, sugar shaker and pewter pepper. Brown earthenware plates and a bean pot dot the bottom shelf. In the far left corner a rush floor stand guards a banister back rocker. A homespun blanket is draped across the back of the chair.

On the mantel above the fireplace are pewter plates, candle molds and Betty lamp. Just beneath them, a musket, with its powder horn, rests on crotch hooks. Beneath this hang a waffle iron, a skimmer and iron ladles and below these several large pots swing from trammel hooks. Close to the hearth cluster the objects most used by the family: brass bed warmers, a squatty foot warmer, the bread peel and a tree trunk which has been hollowed into an enormous mortar and pestle for grinding grain. A large milk pan leans against an old, over-turned beehive used as a stool by the children. Nearby a high chair holds a china-headed doll.

At the right end of the room is an old chest. Between it and the south corner of the fireplace a door leads into a bedroom. There are also doors at both ends of the room.

LIBRARY

As the scene opens, eight year old ROBERT NEELY is busily engaged in making a birch broom. His mother, ELIZABETH THOMPSON-NEELY, is preparing food while his six year old sister JANE teeters on a stool as she grinds spices on the large oak table. She is obviously annoying ROBERT as she sings.

JANE

(Sings)

CATNIP AND LAVENDER
GREEN SAGE AND CHIVES
BASIL AND PENNYROYAL,TOO.
JERSEY TEAPLANT WITH ITS BLOOD RED ROOTS
WILL DYE KERCHIEFS RED FOR YOU
TANSY FOR GREEN DYE AND MAYBE
SILVER MAYTHEM WILL SOOTHE THE BABY.

ROBERT

Can't you be quiet, Jane? I'll never get this finished for cousin Lavinia in time for Christmas!

JANE

But I like to sing.

(Begins the "spice song" again)

ROBERT

(Interrupting)

Mother, can't you make her keep quiet?

ELIZABETH

(Busily packing food into a basket)

Now, Jane, you've ground enough spices. Is your doll ready for her trip this afternoon? Do you have her clothes packed?

JANE

(Jumping off the stool and running over to her doll, called Hannah, sitting in the high chair Jane once used)

Hannah's wearing her blue pinafore. Does she look 'propriate?

ROBERT

(Disgustedly)

Ap-propriate, silly.

JANE

Ap-propriate, cranky!

JANE (Cont'd)
(Turning to her mother thoughtfully)
Are soldiers really going to stay in our house, Mother?

ELIZABETH
Yes, Jane.

JANE
Can't we come back and spend Christmas Day with them?

ELIZABETH
I'm afraid not, dear. Hurry with that broom, Robert. You must help get our things ready.

(There is a knock at the door)

ELIZABETH
(Taking off her apron as she goes to the door)
That may be Lord Stirling now.

JANE
Is he a real Lord, Mother?

ELIZABETH
Shhh!

(Enter LORD STIRLING)

LORD STIRLING
Mrs. Neely?

ELIZABETH
Yes -- Lord Stirling?

LORD STIRLING
Then you were expecting me?

ELIZABETH
Mr. Neely told me of your meeting with him.

LORD STIRLING
I regret the necessity to requisition your home at this season.

ELIZABETH
We are grateful that we can be of service.

LORD STIRLING
You understand why we have to ask you and your family to leave the premises.

ELIZABETH

Of course.

LORD STIRLING

This will be our army's river headquarters. The General himself will stay here from time to time, and, in fact, I am expecting him at any moment.

ELIZABETH

We are indeed honored.

(LORD STIRLING turns to JANE, who, along with ROBERT, has been eyeing him with much curiosity)

LORD STIRLING

And what is your name, little girl?

JANE

Jane Thompson-Neely, sir. And that's --

(Pointing to Robert)

my brother, Robert Thompson-Neely. We both have the same middle name -- because you see my mother's name was Thompson before --

ELIZABETH

Jane, dear, Lord Stirling is not interested in names.

LORD STIRLING

On the contrary, he is very much so. Aye, it's fine to hear a name as honored as your grandfather's. Miller Thompson is known for fair dealing, and, more important, as a patriot. There aren't many along the Delaware this December.

JANE

(Sensing a friend)

Would you mind, sir, --- er, your Lordship, if I asked a question about your name?

LORD STIRLING

Not one bit, but you don't need to say, "Your Lordship."

JANE

Even if you're a real honest-to-goodness Lord?

LORD STIRLING

Even so. I don't care two whoops for titles. It's a matter of principle. I say I'm the rightful heir to the estate of the Earl of Stirling, and a jury in England agrees with me. But the House of Lords says that I haven't proved it, and they won't let me acquire some properties in this country I feel I'm entitled to. But no House of Lords is going to take away a title that belongs to me. Right, son?

[illegible]

Of course,

LORD STIRLING

This will be our army's river headquarters. The General himself will stay here from time to time, and, in fact, I am expecting him at any moment.

[illegible]

We are indeed honored.

(LORD STIRLING turns to JANE, who, along with ROBERT, has been eyeing him with much curiosity)

LORD STIRLING

And what is your name, little girl?

JANE

Jane Thompson-Neely, sir. And that's --

(pointing to Robert)

my brother, Robert Thompson-Neely. We both have the same middle name -- because you see my mother's name was Thompson before --

ELIZABETH

Jane, dear, Lord Stirling is not interested in names.

LORD STIRLING

On the contrary, he is very much so. Aye, it's fine to bear a name as honored as your grandfather's. Miller Thompson is known for fair dealing, and, more important, as a patriot. There aren't many along the Delaware this December.

JANE

(Becoming a friend)

Would you mind, sir, --- er, your Lordship, if I asked a question about your name?

LORD STIRLING

Not one bit, but you don't need to say, "Your Lordship."

[illegible]

Even if you're a real honest-to-goodness Lord?

LORD STIRLING

Even so, I don't care too much for titles. It's a matter of principle. I say I'm the rightful heir to the estate of the Earl of Stirling, and a jury in England agrees with me. But the House of Lords says that I haven't proved it, and they won't let me acquire some properties in this country I feel I'm entitled to. But no House of Lords is going to take away a title that belongs to me. Right, Jane?

ROBERT

Absolutely, sir.

ELIZABETH

(To children)

Come on, you two. Put on your coats, gather your bundles, and walk on over to Cousin Lavinia's. Remember, no fooling around as you cross Pidcock Creek. Tell your cousins that I'll be along shortly.

(ROBERT lingers at the table, gazing longingly at some of his mother's baking)

ROBERT

Could I take the potato custard along, Mother?

ELIZABETH

Of course not! That's for Lord Stirling and the officers who will be with him for dinner. Now you wouldn't want to deprive them of their food, would you?

LORD STIRLING

Let the boy take some along, Mrs. Neely.

ELIZABETH

(Firmly)

No, it is very little we can do for you who are doing so much for us.

(She herds the two children toward the door. JANE is carrying her doll, Hannah. She has placed another in the high chair. She breaks away from her mother, rushes back to the doll and turns to give an explanation to Lord Stirling)

JANE

Mother said I could take only one doll 'cause it will be crowded enough at Cousin Lavinia's with Grandmother, Grandfather and four of us. I'm taking Hannah, but leaving Letitia here. I know that you'll take care of her, won't you, Lord Stirling?

LORD STIRLING

(Smiling, with one hand on the high chair and one on Jane's head)

That I will.

JANE

(Turning tearfully to her mother)

We will be back soon, won't we, Mother?

ELIZABETH
(Exchanging glances with Lord Stirling)
We pray so, dear, we pray so.

(Exit CHILDREN)

You have been very patient with the children, Lord Stirling.

LORD STIRLING
Madam, it is for the children that we are fighting.

ELIZABETH
Come, I shall show you through the rest of the house.

(THEY exit through the door center stage)

(A knock is heard at the door. Another knock and the door is pushed open. Enter KATIE GALLAGHER with a cloak around her and a hood over her chestnut hair. She throws back her hood and beckons to the woman behind her. Her movements are quick and purposeful. The other woman is MINNIE KELLY BUSHNELL O'SHAUGHNESSY, thrice widowed, but still not discouraged)

KATIE
(Listening)
I hear Elizabeth's upstairs? And a man's voice? It must be Lord Stirling.

MINNIE
(With a rich brogue)
Is it now? Sure from what I 'ear he's a man I'd like to be upstairs with, myself.

KATIE
Minnie! You're speaking of one of the finest Generals we have.

MINNIE
Generals are men, ain't they? I've heard this one's handsome and that 'e makes women tremble same as men, but fer different reasons!

KATIE
Minnie - I'm ashamed of you!
(Smiling)
I would think that after three husbands you'd have quieted down a bit.

MINNIE
Sure, I ain't plannin' on quietin' down until I'm finally laid to rest at the feet of the graves of the three of 'em - I want to be put horizontal like at their feet so as not to play favorites. I loved every one of 'em. God bless 'em all!

KATIE
I'm sure you did. But tell me, honestly, you must have had a favorite, now didn't you?

(MINNIE has picked up a feather duster)

MINNIE
Guess - I did. I 'spose the last one wuz the best but the credit should go to meself instead of 'im. Sure I wuz a dumb one with the first, Kelly. You know love's not somethin' ye're expert at all to onct. Takes a lot o' practice. Well, Kelly give me plenty o' practice, that 'e did, 'til his heart give out. Me second, Bushnell, was a different type. He had some learnin' about lotsa things - besides books I mean. We wuz gettin' along fine when he fell out of a Durham boat at high tide - below Delaware Falls.
(Sighs)

KATIE
And O'Shaughnessy?

MINNIE
Oh - him - That wuz a rascal that 'un. Both of us over 50 and each of us spendin' each night as though it wuz our last. Well - one of 'em wuz - for 'im.

KATIE
Oh - Minnie - really!!

MINNIE
Now, Katie, don't go pretendin' ye don't know what it's all about! I know about ye and Johnathan Hulme. Young Robert Neely told me that one night last summer - up there on Bowman's Hill he seen you two -

KATIE
(Angrily)
Minnie - stop - That will be enough. I'm sorry, only you don't know how it is with us. Of course, I love Johnathan, Minnie. When I'm with him I'm - I'm - you know how I feel?

MINNIE
(Softly)
How, dearie?

MINNIE

Sure, I ain't plannin' on quittin' them until I'm finally laid to rest at the feet of the graves of the three of 'em - I want to be put horizontal like at their feet so as not to play favorites. I loved every one of 'em. God bless 'em all!

KATIE

I'm sure you did. But tell me, honestly, you must have had a favorite, now didn't you?

(MINNIE has picked up a feather duster)

MINNIE

Guess - I did. I s'pose the last one was the best but the credit should go to meself instead of him. Sure I was a dumb one with the first, Kelly. You know love's just somethin' you're expert at all to once. Takes a lot of practice. Well, Kelly give me plenty o' practice, that is till [illegible] his heart give out. The second, Donnell, was a different type. He had some learnin' about finer things - bookish [illegible] I mean. We was gettin' along fine when he fell out of a bumboat at high tide - below Delaware Falls.

(Sighs)

KATIE

And O'Shaughnessy?

MINNIE

Ah - him - That was a vessel that one. Both of us were 60- and each of us needin' each other as though it was our last. Well - one of 'em was - for him.

KATIE

Oh - Minnie - really!

MINNIE

Now, Katie, don't go pretendin' ye don't know what it's all about! I know about ye and Johnathan Blaine. Young Robert Kelly told me that one night last summer - out there on Grandma's Hill he seen you two -

KATIE

(Angrily)

Minnie - stop - That will be enough. I'm sorry, only you don't know how it is with me. Of course, I love Jonathan Blaine. When I'm with him - I'm - you know how I feel!

MINNIE

(Softly)

Now, Katie!

KATIE

(Blushing)

I shouldn't be talking this way - but I can't tell anyone else - and I know you understand.

MINNIE

(Putting an arm around her)

Sure - if there's one thing in the world I understand - it's love. Ye wuz sayin'?

KATIE

(Dreamily)

Johnathan makes me feel as if - well, have you ever seen the way a bee draws honey from clover, Minnie?

MINNIE

Can't say as I ever took no notice!

KATIE

Watch it - In the gentle wind of a summer day - The bee seems to kiss the clover blossom and it bends beneath the kiss - so easily - so rightly - so -

MINNIE

Softly - I know 'ow it is - Ye're all willin' and no will - There's only one man at a time that can ever do that to ye, baby - if ye're decent that is - That wonderful feelin' that you're kinda meltin' into 'im and don't ever want to be yourself no more - just part of 'im.

KATIE

(Eagerly)

That's it exactly.

MINNIE

Well, why in God's name don't ye two git married?

KATIE

We had planned to, this coming spring. And then this strange thing came between us!

MINNIE

What's her name? I'll tend to her for ye - that I will.

KATIE

Not a woman, Minnie. In a way it's worse.

MINNIE

Nothin's worse that ain't got two legs!

KATIE

Yes, there is! This has many arms. It's a viewpoint, a conviction.

MINNIE
About this war, I'll wager.

KATIE
That's it. Our disagreement has been growing worse ever since the Declaration of Independence. The whole Hulme family is Quaker, you know.

MINNIE
Well, the lad didn't fall in love with no Quaker, did he?

KATIE
That's the trouble. His father is a kind and just man but he is still trying to influence Johnathan against marrying me.

MINNIE
It's proud he should be if he could win ye.

KATIE
But I'm not a Quaker, you know, just a wicked Episcopalian.

MINNIE
Well, sure that's as close to a Catholic as ye can get and still bypass the Pope. Now me first husband was a Lutheran and we fought like hell. But makin' up was fun! Enough of me own spats. It's yers we gotta do somethin' about. I take it, Johnathan's got no sympathy fer our cause.

KATIE
Minnie, if Johnathan marries me, he'll be read out of meeting. And yet -- I half understand. His father and his brothers feel we should be loyal to the mother country -- regardless of what she does to us.

MINNIE
It's lots of company they have.

KATIE
Minnie, it doesn't matter how I feel about Johnathan -- it has got to be over with us.
(She cries)
I've sent back his engagement ring.

MINNIE
Now, girl, you needn't have been that hasty.

(They hear ELIZABETH and LORD STIRLING approaching. KATIE hastily wipes away her tears)

ELIZABETH
Oh, I'm glad you've come, Katie. May I present Lord Stirling. This is Miss Katie Gallagher.

LORD STIRLING
(Taking her hand)
I am honored to meet the daughter of Tom Gallagher. He is a great help to us.

KATIE
Thank you, sir.

ELIZABETH
And this
(Motioning to Minnie)
is Mrs. O'Shaughnessy who helps us all for miles around. I don't know what we'd do without Minnie!

LORD STIRLING
We, too, are counting on your help, Mrs. O'Shaughnessy!
(Taking her hand)

MINNIE
Sure ye've taken me breath - ye have. It's honored I be to serve ye, and the cause and every blessed soldier in it.

LORD STIRLING
I thank you for every one of our men. Some, I know, will thank you in person.

MINNIE
(With interest)
Will they now?

ELIZABETH
Excuse me, Sir, while you give instructions to Katie, I'll be off to my family. 'Tis growing late.

LORD STIRLING
Certainly..

(ELIZABETH leaves)

Well, Mistress Katie, it has always been my way, and I may say General Washington's as well, when there's a job to be done, we pick the best person we can find for the job, and put him or her in command. We've had excellent reports on your courage and your work for the cause.

KATIE
Thank you, Sir.

LORD STIRLING
General Washington and I have studied this area with great care. And your father, I might add, was most helpful. This house will best serve as our river headquarters.

KATIE
Since Bowman's Hill is nearby, I expect.

LORD STIRLING
Most certainly. It makes this the most informative and strategic post along the Delaware. Signals from my sentries on the hill top will keep me informed on Hessian troop movements across the river. Quartered here will be several officers besides myself - Lieutenant James Monroe and Captain James Moore. On occasions the General himself may stay with us. We'll need someone to keep the house and cook for us - someone who can be counted on to keep silent about any plans she may happen to overhear. I trust Mrs. O'Shaughnessy will do likewise.
(Turning to Minnie)

MINNIE
That I will, Sir. I opens me mouth a lot - but I kin keep it shut when needs be!

LORD STIRLING
Mr. Gallagher gave me assurances on that point, when I told him that we needed two reliable women here. . . I hesitate to tell you both what some of your other duties will be. They'll take strong stomachs.

KATIE
That goes with strong arms, Lord Stirling.

LORD STIRLING
That bedroom
(Motioning to the door, center stage)
will be used as a hospital. I'll take the upstairs chamber for myself.

KATIE
If you'll pardon my boldness, Sir, I noticed you limp badly. The stairs are very steep and winding. They may be hard for you.

LORD STIRLING
An annoyance - my rheumatism. But those stairs won't be as painful for me as for the poor devils who are suffering from dysentery and dying of camp fever. They'd never make the stairs even with help. The lower room will better serve them.

KATIE
Whatever you say, sir. But will we be able to give the sick the care they need.

LORD STIRLING
Far better than they'd get in our present hospitals. Camp diseases kill 10 to 20 men for every one killed in battle. Now, we'll have some of the milder cases act as orderlies for the men, but you must realize that you and Mrs. O'Shaughnessy will be exposed to disease -- even to death -- you are aware of that?

KATIE
I am. Father explained it all to me, sir. I told him that since we all must die one day from some cause, what better way is there to go than in serving one's country?

LORD STIRLING
But you are very young.

KATIE
So are our soldiers.

MINNIE
Now, why don't ye leave serving the men to me, sir? I've been around so many diseases, none of 'em'll get me now.

LORD STIRLING
As you wish, ladies.

(The door is opened and a strong, good-looking young man enters. This is JOHNATHAN HULME. He seems startled to find Lord Stirling present, and turns to leave. LORD STIRLING indicates that <u>he</u> is leaving)

LORD STIRLING
You're in command, Lieutenant Gallagher --- and you next in command.
(He turns to Minnie and salutes)

MINNIE
Aye, aye, sir.

(LORD STIRLING exits. JOHNATHAN, puzzled, moves to Katie)

JOHNATHAN
Lieutenant Gallagher -- ?!

KATIE
In a manner of speaking. That was Lord Stirling.

JOHNATHAN
I know who he is. But who is Lieutenant Gallagher?

KATIE

Me.

JOHNATHAN

Thee?

MINNIE

I'll go to the barn for straw -- the sick'll be needin' plenty to lie on.

(Puts on bonnet and leaves)

JOHNATHAN

(After a moment)

I have brought thee back thy ring.

KATIE

'Tis your ring, Johnathan --- no longer mine.

JOHNATHAN

Thee cannot mean it. One does not love in June, and forget in December.

KATIE

Forget? Of course not. But neither can I forget a day in July -- and a declaration of independence.

JOHNATHAN

Dear Katie, I've tried to tell thee so many times -- fighting will not gain independence.

KATIE

Will words? What were the words of George III to our pleas?

JOHNATHAN

I know, I know. But Katie, what does this war really have to do with thee and me - the way we feel when I hold thee close.

(Takes her in his arms)

KATIE

You are not fair, Johnathan, whenever you hold me - the will goes out of me - the way a candle melts beneath the flame.

JOHNATHAN

(Points)

Look out that window, Katie, at the slim new moon upriver. Remember what we said in May about the twelfth moon hence? Thee knows what the stars tell about us, Katie, that we were meant to be man and wife.

KATIE

Were once, perhaps, but no longer.

(Breaks away)

How can you think of us when this very moment men are freezing and giving their lives for us - are going to suffer and perhaps die right here in this house?

JOHNATHAN

What others do is theirs own business -- not mine or thine!

KATIE

(Angrily)

It _is_ your business as it is that of every American. Many will give their lives to make this country free for you and your kind to go on having theories about freedom.

(Softly)

My darling, much as it hurts my heart to say this, the man I love must love his country, as I do -- yes -- be willing to die -- if need be -- as I am willing.

JOHNATHAN

To die, Katie? It is not that I am afraid to die -- it is that I will not kill.

(MINNIE's voice is heard, off)

MINNIE

For God's sakes, help me with this straw -- me arms is breakin'!

(JOHNATHAN goes to the door and opens it. MINNIE almost tumbles in, and JOHNATHAN takes the straw from her. Suddenly a tall, solidly-built man, in a faded blue uniform strides through the open door. This is GEN. GEORGE WASHINGTON, aged 44, who is followed by LORD STIRLING.

KATIE, JOHNATHAN and MINNIE all stand transfixed, as the TWO MEN cross the room without a word, and exit up the stairs)

CURTAIN

ACT I

Scene 2

The same scene, later.

A number of items reveal that the house is now an army headquarters and a hastily set-up hospital as well. Long muskets with pendant powder horns are stacked in corners. Two bedraggled SOLDIERS sit on the floor making cartridges. Medical supplies stand on the mantel. Globar salts, ipecac, bleeding equipment, etc. Some opened, some unopened. Some crude instruments lie on a table. Several SOLDIERS wearing odd bits of filthy clothing wander in and out of the adjoining hospital room. One, his legs wrapped in burlap, is draped in a worn blanket. He's standing near the fire. SERGEANT SAUTTER, a Pennsylvania Dutch soldier, in charge of the hospital room, is eyeing MINNIE admiringly as she prepares food at the hearth. He speaks with the rising inflection of the Pennsylvania Dutch.

SERGEANT SAUTTER
Those biscuits of yours are the best ever I ate yet.

MINNIE
(Loving it)
Go on with ye.

SAUTTER
Ach - I mean what I say to you, girl.

MINNIE
Callin' me girl and me old enough to be yer -

SAUTTER
(Quickly)
Wife.

(BIPPUS' voice is heard from hospital room)

DR. BIPPUS

Minnie, when will that tea be ready?

MINNIE

Soon - Dr. - Tell me, Sergeant, is there enough bark essence in this tea for that Dr. Bippus of yours?

(Holds out a ladle)

SAUTTER

(Tries it gingerly)

I should think so but don't you go calling him no doctor of mine. He's no doctor, at all, he's a quack.

MINNIE

Ain't most of 'em?

1st SOLDIER

Fer God's sake, quit yer cooin'. Let her finish the damned tea an' git on with mendin' me pants.

(Indicating a badly torn pair hanging over a chair)

SAUTTER

Hold yer - By God - you ain't got no britches to hold, have you?

(THEY laugh)

1st SOLDIER

It ain't no laughin' matter. There's but a few pairs of decent pants in the whole ragged army. Even General Washington's is lookin' though they might give way any second.

2nd SOLDIER

(Making cartridges)

He lost all his luggage like the rest of us when we skinned out of Fort Lee.

SAUTTER

Quit belly achin' about yer bottoms - we're lucky we got over to this side of the Delaware with our heads.

1st SOLDIER

But, by God - britches - that's the least a soldier can ask for. Why does he join up anyway? The pay's little enough but a uniform's worth more'n money in some ways. It catches girls for instance. Us? We ain't got nothin' - six months' back pay due, not even the lower half of a uniform and not a lady in sight.

SAUTTER

A damned lie, Soldier. There's a lady right here.

1st SOLDIER
(With a grin at Minnie)
Where?

MINNIE
(Good-naturedly)
Go on with ye. I'll forgive 'em. Sure if me own backside had chilblains I'd be grumpy meself.

SAUTTER
Stop belly-achin'! The old man's writing Congress all the time trying to get uniforms.

MINNIE
Why d'ye call him old? He's only 44.

1st SOLDIER
By God, that's twice as old as me. It's too God damned old to remember -- if a man wants a chance to take his pants off for a woman, he's got to be in 'em first.

SAUTTER
Washington ain't too old to understand that --- don't fool yerself. Why d'ye s'pose he asked Martha to come all the way to Boston last Xmas -- to wash his socks? I'll bet he's missin' her like hell right now.

2nd SOLDIER
He's right. I'd say the General's still got an eye for a pretty woman.

MINNIE
And one thing sure -- they're all got their eyes on him. I heard about some of 'em up at Brunswick practically throwin' themselves at 'im -- no wonder -- the way he carries hisself -- a fine figure of a man --

1st SOLDIER
See, I told ye -- yer thinkin' of his legs in them britches --

MINNIE
Maybe I am! Here's yer pants, boy.

1st SOLDIER
You're a good dame, Minnie.
(Puts his arm around her)
Now if a candle had burnt low enough --

MINNIE
In the dark or not -- it'd be a roll to remember, soldier.

1st SOLDIER
(As he pulls on his pants)
Thanks to you, Minnie, it's no longer true what I heard General Washington say the other day.

MINNIE

What's that?

1st SOLDIER

"The British may be frozen-faced, but I've got the only frozen-assed army in the world!"

(The door is thrown open and a COURIER rushes in)

COURIER

General Washington -- ?

SAUTTER

Who's wantin' him?

COURIER

Message--from General Sullivan.

SAUTTER

I'll take it.

COURIER

Orders to deliver it to him personal --

SAUTTER

Then you'll have to wait. Take a seat.

(COURIER finds a place to squat)

2nd SOLDIER

(Who has been brooding)

I still say the General's got an eye for a pretty woman.

SAUTTER

Maybe. But none of 'em get anywhere with 'im. Unlike you, 'es got character as well as carriage.

2nd SOLDIER

That's what you think.

SAUTTER

That's what I know, soldier.

COURIER

This is important. How long have I got to wait?

SAUTTER

Stand easy. There's a staff meetin' comin' up any minute.

DR. BIPPUS

(Offstage)

Minnie!

MINNIE

Coming, sir.

(To 1st Soldier)

You and yer frozen behind! I forgot all about the tea.

(DR. BIPPUS appears in the doorway. He is long-winded and pompous)

MINNIE

It's all ready, Doctor.

DR. BIPPUS

Minnie, that last man they brought in, we'll physic him at once.

MINNIE

Beggin' yer pardon, sir, the poor boy's almost done in already -- between dysentery and vomitin'. Physic'll end him. 'Tis somethin' soothin' he needs now.

DR. BIPPUS

(Raising his hand)

If you don't mind, ma'am, I'm in charge here. I've accomplished a great many miraculous cures in my day.

MINNIE

(Muttering)

An' d'ye keep track o' the kills?

DR. BIPPUS

Hold your tongue, woman. Get the ipecac.

SAUTTER

Doctor, have you anything for the common itch? The poor devils are sufferin' as much from lice as from diarrhea and pneumonia.

DR. BIPPUS

(Grandly)

What do you expect, man, from common wretches like these?

MINNIE

I seen you scratchin' yer own behind just now.

(Handing him ipecac)

Here, go on with yer purgin' and bleedin'. Only it seems crazy to me -- takin' the blood of them that's got need fer all of it they can keep!

(KATIE enters from upstairs, carrying an armload of linen)

KATIE

Here are the sheets, Doctor.

DR. BIPPUS

Do you have my saw there, Minnie?

MINNIE

Here it is -- I'm sorry to say.

(KATIE starts across to the hospital-room door. DR. BIPPUS stops her and takes the linen from her)

DR. BIPPUS

Not you, my dear.

KATIE

But Sergeant Green's counting on me. I know it.

DR. BIPPUS

You've never seen an amputation. It's a bloody bit, and he'll yell his head off. After I saw his leg, we plunge the stump into hot tar.

KATIE

Will he be conscious, sir?

DR. BIPPUS

Most of 'em faint at that point from pain and loss of blood.

(GEN. WASHINGTON enters from upstairs. The COURIER jumps to his feet)

WASHINGTON

(To Sautter)

Sergeant, clear the room, please, and tell Capt. Hamilton, Lieutenant Monroe, and Colonel Tilghman I wish to see them here immediately.

(Washington turns to the Courier)

Yes -- ?

COURIER

Message from General Sullivan, sir. Instructed to put it in your hands, personal.

WASHINGTON

(Taking message and beginning to read it)

Thank you.

COURIER

Told to wait for an answer, sir.

(After a moment, WASHINGTON folds the message, which he holds in his hand during ensuing scene, most of which he spends with his back to the fire)

WASHINGTON
My compliments to General Sullivan. No answer.

(The COURIER salutes, and leaves. DR. BIPPUS and MINNIE have exited into the hospital room. SAUTTER has taken the first and second SOLDIERS with him. LORD STIRLING has entered from upstairs. As KATIE starts to enter the hospital room, WASHINGTON stops her)

WASHINGTON
Miss Gallagher, it isn't necessary for you to be in there.

KATIE
They're amputating Sergeant Green's leg, sir, and I promised I'd be with him.

WASHINGTON
I would spare you the sight.

KATIE
I can comfort him, sir.
(SHE exits)

LORD STIRLING
She will, too, General.

WASHINGTON
We can expect such conduct from Tom Gallagher's daughter.

LORD STIRLING
Mrs. O'Shaughnessy has been of great assistance, too.

WASHINGTON
(Smiling)
Careful, Stirling, I think she has an eye out for you.

LORD STIRLING
Lord preserve me!

(CAPT. HAMILTON and LIEUT. MONROE enter, along with COL. TENCH TILGHMAN. WASHINGTON waits for them to take

their places in the room, which is
now cleared)

WASHINGTON
(Finally)
Well, gentlemen?

HAMILTON
Lieut. Monroe and I have just checked the sentries on Bowman's Hill.

WASHINGTON
And the boats, Capt. Hamilton?

HAMILTON
Col. Humpton has done a thorough job, sir. There's not a single boat of any kind, canoe or raft, that the enemy might find on either shore from Easton to below Bristol.

MONROE
The chance of the Hessians getting a spy across the river is therefore most unlikely.

HAMILTON
Until ----

(WASHINGTON looks at him questioningly)

HAMILTON
Until the river freezes over.

WASHINGTON
And when is that likely?

MONROE
Not before Christmas, sir, according to the best information we can assemble.

WASHINGTON
My thanks to Col. Humpton and his men. For the moment, then, we are secure, but this is the last good report we can expect.
(Turns to Stirling)

LORD STIRLING
I wish I could contradict you, General, but it is not possible. Of Gen. Lee's two thousand men brought here by Gen. Sullivan only two hundred are really fit for service.

(WASHINGTON fingers the message
noticeably, but remains silent)

MONROE
Gen. Gates has no more than six hundred rank and file.

TILGHMAN
And most of his Brigadiers are sick or absent.

HAMILTON
(Reading from paper)
Col. Cadwalader sends this report from Bristol: "From Yardley Ferry to Bristol our line of defense is hopelessly thin. In the first division I have nine hundred men from Hitchcock's Rhode Island Continentals, one thousand Philadelphia Associators, Capt. Thomas Rodney's Delaware Militia from Dover, and two artillery companies each with one six-pounder."

TILGHMAN
This from Gen, Ewing: "In the second division I have chiefly Pennsylvania Militia and a few from Jersey -- seven hundred in all." And Col. John Nixon reports from Dunk's Ferry, our southernmost line of defense that tides there make conditions on the Delaware even worse than at any point north.

LORD STIRLING
As you know, General, the sentiment against re-enlistment is stronger than ever -- not enough to fill one of Col. Humpton's canoes.

WASHINGTON
Then by New Year's Day we may expect to be without an army. Is that not the general assessment?

LORD STIRLING
Except for the three thousand men Gen. Lee is bringing. We have no word yet from Gen. Lee.

WASHINGTON
(Wearily opens the message he has been fingering)
I regret to inform you that we have. Gen. Sullivan reports that Lee was taken by the British this morning -- three miles inside their lines -- in a whorehouse.

(Distressed silence. Suddenly a scream is heard from the hospital room, and a shudder passes through each of the men)

WASHINGTON
Gentlemen, shall I briefly review our position? The continuing cold means the greatest hardship to our men. My efforts to obtain more supplies and medical equipment have met with

no success other than the receipt of some old clothes from the Safety Council in Philadelphia. I have received no response at all to my latest letter to Congress, in which I asked for clothing and food. By January first this may be of no concern to us, since we are likely to have no army to equip. The tide of public sentiment is at a standstill, and indeed too many of our fairweather friends are accepting pardons and going over to the enemy. This lack of patriotism may be the most serious matter facing us, and yet I find it understandable, in view of our record of defeats of the past six months.

LORD STIRLING
Then, sir, what are we to do?

WASHINGTON
Obviously there is only one thing left.

(The MEN lean forward expectantly)

Attack.

(Stunned reaction)

No matter what you may think, gentlemen, I am in full possession of all my faculties. I ask only that you keep what I have to yourselves. I declare this Council of War adjourned.

(The hospital door is opened slowly, and KATIE emerges, sick)

WASHINGTON
Sergeant Green -- ?

KATIE
He died holding my hand.

(Silently the OFFICERS exit. KATIE starts off slowly toward the stairs, then suddenly claps her hand to her mouth and rushes off. WASHINGTON enters the hospital room, and closes the door behind him)

(After a moment or two, 1st and 2nd SOLDIERS cautiously enter, followed by the COURIER, who holds a warm blanket around his shoulders)

1st SOLDIER
They've cleared out. Come on in.

2nd SOLDIER
I guess the old man has gone to his room.

1st SOLDIER
Something's on his mind -- I can feel it.

2nd SOLDIER
Nothing good for us, you can be sure. Keepin' us holed up here in the dead of winter, and most of us so sick and cold we're no God-damned good as soldiers anyway. By God, I'd like to tell the old buzzard what a rotten deal he's givin' us.

1st SOLDIER
Keep yer voice down -- you've been bellyachin' ever since ye've been here.

2nd SOLDIER
I gotta right to -- I got the God-damnedest real bellyache I ever had in my life.

1st SOLDIER
Your guts'll get used to no grub ---

2nd SOLDIER
It ain't my belly so much -- it's the God-damned smoke in that stinkin' hospital room.

COURIER
They say smoke kills disease.

2nd SOLDIER
Ye mean quacks like Bippus sez it does.
(Deprecatingly)
Orderly! That's not for the likes of me. Come January first I'll be back on my farm and somebody else can clean up the bloody mess.

COURIER
I'll take yer place any time. God, it's good to feel the warmth of this fire goin' up yer --

2nd SOLDIER
Ever notice how the old man likes to warm <u>his</u> behind? The rest of 'em sit by the table, but he's always on his feet -- ass to the heat.

1st SOLDIER
He ain't standing there only to keep warm.

2nd SOLDIER
Why then?

1st SOLDIER
I got it figured this way. You know what a crank he is --

2nd SOLDIER
Fussiest God-damned general in the world!

1st SOLDIER
'Til we started retreatin' through the Jerseys, he wasn't second to none of them fancy pants British officers.

2nd SOLDIER
What're ye trying to prove?

1st SOLDIER
Washington lost his baggage like the rest of us at Fort Lee, and his only uniform's pretty threadbare. Ain't ye noticed?

2nd SOLDIER
I noticed.

1st SOLDIER
Well, he's got to be careful. He can't sit down!

2nd SOLDIER
(Laughs)
By God, ye're right! Always has wore his pants real tight. If he sat down -- zzip!

1st SOLDIER
(To Courier)
What bad news did you bring?

COURIER
How should I know? I can't read -- that's why I'm a courier.

2nd SOLDIER
I still say there's no sense to keepin' us here. We got shot up in Long Island, then starved and froze all the way across the Jerseys. Now we're rottin' here when we could be home with our wives fer Christmas.

1st SOLDIER
Soldier, you know damned well you ain't got no wife.

2nd SOLDIER
Women, then, what the hell's the difference? I've taken the cold an' the hunger, the jeers and the jokes, but now I'm fed up to the teeth.

1st SOLDIER
Ye ain't got no teeth, neither.

2nd SOLDIER

Gums, then. Anyways, I'm tellin' that stiff-necked general of ours before this night's over. By God, I'm gonna tell him.

(WASHINGTON appears in the hospital door)

I'm gonna face up to Gen. Washington once and for all and tell him what I think!

WASHINGTON

What do you think?

(For a moment the MEN stand frozen, then they start to move rapidly toward the exit)

WASHINGTON

Wait -- I want to know.

(The MEN stop. WASHINGTON turns to Courier)

Why haven't you returned to your command?

COURIER

It's three days since I've been warm, General.

WASHINGTON

(Compassionately)

And when did you have some food?

COURIER

Same time.

WASHINGTON

Stop by the cook-house and tell them I said you should fill up.

COURIER

Thank ye, sir.

(He leaves)

WASHINGTON

(To the 1st Soldier)

They can use you in there.

(1st SOLDIER exits quickly and gratefully into hospital room)

WASHINGTON
(To 2nd Soldier)
Your name?

2nd SOLDIER
Scott, sir, of the Delaware Militia.

WASHINGTON
Come by the fire, Scott.

SCOTT
(Startled)
Thank you, sir.

WASHINGTON
What <u>do</u> you think?

SCOTT
Well, sir, I -- I --

WASHINGTON
Be seated, sir.
(Indicates a chair, then takes his normal stance before the fire)
Well, out with it, boy. What's the grievance?

SCOTT
Everything, sir. I can understand why we're fightin', and I've been willin' enough, but anyone can see we're just waitin' fer the end. There ain't no guns to fight with, food to eat, nor medicines fer the sick. Why let us rot by this river? It don't make no sense, sir. The least you could do is give us leave for Christmas.
(Pathetically)
I want to go home, sir.

WASHINGTON
So do I, Scott, so do I. How long have you been away?

SCOTT
Almost a year.

WASHINGTON
A long time. Too long. I haven't been to Mt. Vernon for eighteen months.

SCOTT
A year and a half, sir?

WASHINGTON
Why do you suppose I'm not there now?

SCOTT

I don't know, sir. I'd go if I was you. Other officers do. And you're commander-in-chief!

WASHINGTON

That title, soldier, carries responsibility, not privilege -- responsibility for you, for each soldier in the army, for every citizen in the land. Don't you think I'd like to be at home during the Christmas season? I can see the house now, the holly and mistletoe Mrs. Washington uses across the mantel. I can smell the turkey roasting in the kitchen, the spices, the -- enough of that. I'm hungry too, soldier. And I'm as puzzled as you are by the way Congress is acting. I agree we've only defeats to show since we became a nation six months ago. Cornwallis and Howe have written us off as beaten. Cornwallis is so sure, he's returning to England. We haven't a chance in the world to win -- if -- if --

SCOTT

If what, sir?

WASHINGTON

If you and I agree with the British generals. If you and I are ready to tear up our Declaration of Independence, to say we're sorry and bow to tyranny, if we say it's a damned lie that "all men are created equal," and we're fools enough to build a government on such a lie. Are you ready to say that, soldier?

SCOTT

Well, sir, I --

WASHINGTON

You're not ready to say that -- this Christmas or any other. You've fought too long for this belief. You've left too many fallen comrades on the way here. A number lie out there newly buried by the bank of the Delaware. They died for what we have to live and fight for -- not only fancy theories about liberty, but the right to earn a living, to own some day a farm and a house like this one. I don't know what you're going to do, but I do know what you and the others have made me decide to do. You men who've stuck with me throughout this unbearable fall have given me the courage to fight on, to keep going no matter who says we're beaten. Do you want America to see another Christmas, soldier?

SCOTT

I do, sir.

WASHINGTON

Suppose I told you that this very Christmas you, the other men and I, are going to give a great Christmas present to

this weary country of ours -- the priceless gift of victory for our cause!

SCOTT

<u>This</u> Christmas, sir?

WASHINGTON

With God's help. And the victory will mean many more Christmases for America in the years to come. We can put up with a mirthless Christmas in 1776, if we can count on merrier Christmases through the years, can't we, Scott?

SCOTT

Indeed we can, sir, but how?

WASHINGTON

You must rely on me, and I must rely on you. For the moment, I count on your silence about what I have told you.

SCOTT

You can, sir.

WASHINGTON

Now, back to duty.

(SCOTT exits into the hospital room. WASHINGTON stands before the fire, gently rubbing his backside, as

<u>THE CURTAIN FALLS</u>

ACT II

Scene 1

Same as Act I. Later that night.

1st SOLDIER and SCOTT are standing over CAPTAIN MOORE who lies on a straw pallet near the hearth. SAUTTER is leaning down, adjusting the blanket to make the CAPTAIN more comfortable.

SAUTTER
How is that, Captain?

MOORE
Better, Sergeant, much better.
(Speaks with difficulty)
It was kind of you to carry me out.

SCOTT
'Twas nothing, sir!

MOORE
But it was. How good this heat feels! Are you sure it's all right for me to be here -- ?

SAUTTER
Of course. It'll be good for ye.

MOORE
That's not what I mean. Are you sure I won't be in the way?

SCOTT
I don't think so, sir. The General's not expected back and Lord Stirling hasn't left his room.

MOORE
Poor man --- this cold must raise havoc with his rheumatism.

1st SOLDIER
From what I hear, the ladies in the neighborhood are that much safer.

(MOORE laughs feebly)

MOORE
. . . I wish I could share this warmth with the others.

SAUTTER

I wish so, too, sir, but it's impossible. We're making them as comfortable as we can, never fear.

1st SOLDIER

Sautter, what wuz them officers plannin' out here?

SAUTTER

You ask a lot of questions, soldier.

1st SOLDIER

Washington, Stirling, them others . . . . I smell something big.

SAUTTER

(Pulls back)

You smell somethin' awful!

SCOTT

(Joining them)

He's right, Sergeant. The old man must have some plan.

1st SOLDIER

You talked with him. What'd he say?

SCOTT

You don't think I'd tell you.

1st SOLDIER

Come on . . . come on . . . What'd he say?

SCOTT

(Big man)

That's between me and the General.

1st SOLDIER

Ah. . I bet he didn't tell you anything.

SCOTT

He told me plenty.

1st SOLDIER

What, man, what?!

SCOTT

He told me what we're doin' here.

1st SOLDIER

I know what we're doin' here . . . freezin' our --- ! But why?

SCOTT

(Quietly)

He told me that, too.

(The outside door is opened, and GENERAL WASHINGTON enters. The MEN are startled and abashed -- have they been overheard?)

SAUTTER

I -- I'm sorry, sir, we just brought the Captain out -- for -- some more heat, sir, er --

(SCOTT and 1st SOLDIER edge toward hospital room)

WASHINGTON

No explanation necessary, Sergeant.

(Crossing)

I hope you're comfortable, Captain.

MOORE

I am, sir, but if I'm in the way, I can be moved back. Sergeant Sautter -- will you, please?

WASHINGTON

No, indeed, Captain Moore is not in the way.

(Dismissing them)

Thank you, men.

(The MEN exit)

MOORE

Forgive the stench, sir. I know how bad it must be.

WASHINGTON

Sickly flesh doesn't turn my stomach -- it's decaying spirit and treacherous tongues that make me retch.

MOORE

(Gently)

Sir, have we a chance to win?

WASHINGTON

Do you doubt, too, Captain?

MOORE

No, sir. But why is it that our efforts do not meet more support?

WASHINGTON

How I wish I could answer! Human nature never takes kindly to privation, no matter how just the cause. Men's minds, their imaginations -- these must be stimulated by some bold, unexpected action. . . .

(Pause)

MOORE

Go on, sir.

WASHINGTON

There'll be time, Captain.

MOORE

Time, General? For me?

WASHINGTON

Of course. You'll sight your howitzers on many an enemy target still.

MOORE

How soon, sir -- and where?

(Before WASHINGTON can answer, two SENTRIES enter, pulling JOHNATHAN with them)

1st SENTRY

Excuse me, sir -- we found this man on the path behind the house. He wouldn't answer our challenge.

JOHNATHAN

I object to these high-handed methods, sir. I presume thee is General Washington.

WASHINGTON

I am. And I must object to civilians wandering close to my headquarters, especially at night. Your name, sir.

JOHNATHAN

Johnathan Hulme. My farm adjoins this one to the south.

WASHINGTON

Did you say "adjoins"? How far is your line from, say, the site of our southern sentry post?

JOHNATHAN

Some five hundred yards, sir.

WASHINGTON

Then may I ask why you were walking in the immediate vicinity of this headquarters?

JOHNATHAN

I hoped that I might find Miss Katie Gallagher.

WASHINGTON

She is not here. Hulme, all I shall do on this occasion

is give an admonition, but see to it that you do not trespass in this area again.

JOHNATHAN

I see no reason why my actions should be restricted.

WASHINGTON

I'm afraid that I do.

JOHNATHAN

It is widely known, sir, that I am neutral in sentiment.

WASHINGTON

Is that supposed to reassure me? I find it difficult to understand how any American can be neutral in these times.

JOHNATHAN

A Quaker, sir, is neutral at all times.

WASHINGTON

That means committed to neither side -- militarily speaking, of course.

JOHNATHAN

Of course.

WASHINGTON

And commercially? You are a farmer, you say.

JOHNATHAN

The best pork and poultry in the area, if I may say so.

WASHINGTON

Really? We've seen little enough of either. I suppose Colonel Rall is a good customer -- the Hessians delight in pork, I understand.

JOHNATHAN

If you are seeking information, sir, I do not choose to continue this conversation any further.

WASHINGTON

As you wish. And I trust that applies equally to the enemy's inquiries about us, Hulme.

JOHNATHAN

(Firmly)

As I have said, sir, I am neutral.

WASHINGTON

Good evening, sir.

JOHNATHAN
Good evening.
(Starting out)
Should you see Miss Gallagher . . . .

WASHINGTON
(Cutting in)
Good evening.

(JOHNATHAN exits)

MOORE
God save us from neutrals!

WASHINGTON
(Sighs)
And treacherous tongues. . . . Somehow reports of our situation are getting to the enemy at Trenton.

MOORE
Do you have doubts about Hulme, sir?

WASHINGTON
Not his convictions, but his ability to maintain them when commercial advantage is involved.

MOORE
I have known Quakers, General -- their honesty is as steadfast as their neutrality.

WASHINGTON
Granted, but this very honesty may make Hulme vulnerable to skillful handling -- and the enemy is skillful.

MOORE
Then why did you let him go?

WASHINGTON
I had no cause to hold him.
(Pause)
And besides he cannot now affect our immediate plan of action. . . .

(MOORE moves his position on the pallet, and WASHINGTON crosses to help him)

WASHINGTON
It's always a miracle to me -- you who suffer the most, give the most in service and loyalty. I thank God I am not completely surrounded by summer soldiers.

MOORE
Summer soldiers, sir?

WASHINGTON
It's a phrase of Tom Paine's.

MOORE
Oh, yes, the journalist who served with us throughout the Jersey retreat.

WASHINGTON
The same.

MOORE
A real fighter, sir.

WASHINGTON
With both pen and sword. His new pamphlet, "American Crisis No. 1" is our order of the day.

MOORE
Summer soldiers . . . How does he use the phrase, sir?

WASHINGTON
(Reading from pamphlet)
"These are the times that try men's souls. The summer soldier and the sunshine patriot will, in this crisis, shrink from the service of his country, but he that stands it now deserves the love and thanks of man and woman."

(MOORE reaches out and takes the pamphlet from WASHINGTON)

MOORE
"These are the times that try men's souls. . . "
Aye, that they do.

WASHINGTON
This, Captain, is a weapon, and God knows we need all we can get. We must have a victory _now_ -- we must strike at once -- in a desperate gamble. _We have_ no other choice.

MOORE
When, General?

(WASHINGTON does not reply)

When, General -- I beg you -- I have little time --

WASHINGTON
Tomorrow -- at midnight -- we cross. Then -- one hour before dawn -- we make an attempt on Trenton.

(MOORE, excited, tries to rise.
WASHINGTON eases him back gently)

WASHINGTON

This, Captain, is the first momentous crisis in the life of our young nation. Paine's words can serve as weapons in this war for independence. They will be read to every corporal's guard before we cross. Our battle cry will be "Victory or Death." We cannot give the men enough to eat, or wear, or fight with, but we can give them words to warm their spirits.

MOORE

I am grateful, sir, for what you have just told me. It makes my own crossing not quite so pointless. Don't try to reassure me, sir, I know that I'll not make it. But be assured -- I'm not afraid. I would make one request, sir.

WASHINGTON

Anything, Captain.

MOORE

Omit the last two words in the battle cry. Make it -- just -- "Victory."

<u>CURTAIN</u>

ACT II

Scene 2

Lighting on one side of stage reveals a pathway not far north of the Old Ferry Inn.

The time is early Christmas morning, 1776.

KATIE is walking south, carrying baskets of food in each arm. It is snowing, and she is hurrying with her head bent against the bitter wind. JOHNATHAN HULME is rushing in the opposite direction. He, too, is carrying baskets of foodstuff. He sees KATIE and tries to sneak past her. She looks up and recognizes him.

KATIE
Johnathan Hulme! Where are you going in this weather?

JOHNATHAN
I might ask thee the same question!

KATIE
Obviously I'm headed toward the inn.

JOHNATHAN
Obviously. And may I ask thee why?

KATIE
That is none of your business. Suppose you answer my question.

JOHNATHAN
That is no longer thy business -- but I am going to Trenton.

KATIE
And may I ask you why -- on a day like this -- you cross that ice-filled river and ride nine miles to Trenton?

JOHNATHAN
Frankly, Colonel Rall has asked to see me. A matter of supplies, no doubt.

KATIE
No doubt! But surely you cannot pass our sentries.

JOHNATHAN
Thee thinks not? Katie, the Rebel line is so thin along the river, I know a dozen spots where I can get through.

KATIE
But there are extra guards now. All civilians are forbidden to cross.

JOHNATHAN
I take orders from God, not generals, Katie. Thee knows that. Also thy General Washington allows me freedom of movement.

KATIE
But, Johnathan, our country is at war, whether you recognize the fact or not.

JOHNATHAN
I recognize only that we have been remiss in our efforts to prevent more bloodshed.

KATIE
Pray, do not try to interfere in any way.

JOHNATHAN
Interfere with what? Does thee think I do not see what is going on? I live close to the Rebel camp, remember? Something's afoot.

KATIE
So you go to Trenton -- to inform on us.

JOHNATHAN
I shall do my duty as I see it.

KATIE
Johnathan, please, if you have one vestige of good will left in your heart toward me, pray do not continue on this self-righteous mission of yours. If you proceed, I must report you.

JOHNATHAN
Do as thee wishes.

KATIE
(Panicky)
But our sentries will shoot to kill --

JOHNATHAN
But I have already told thee -- I have freedom of movement.

JOHNATHAN (cont'd)
Katie, thee do thy duty as thee sees it -- I'll do mine.
(He starts to move on)

KATIE
(Trying to hold him back)
Consider this irony, Johnathan -- there's not a single man we can trust to go and return to tell us the situation in Trenton. Yet you're free to play your trade -- and likely report on the pitiful plight of our army.

JOHNATHAN
I go as a Quaker -- dedicated to the brotherhood of men....

KATIE
You go as traitor. Go, then, go!

(HE rushes off. SHE puts down one basket, brushes away tears, takes basket up and runs off stage in the direction of the Inn. The spotlight now shifts to the other end of the stage. WASHINGTON, STIRLING, and HAMILTON are seated by a table inside a tent. They are going over papers piled upon the table. KATIE rushes in, obviously distraught. The OFFICERS rise)

KATIE
General Washington, I've had great difficulty finding you.

WASHINGTON
We desired privacy, but since you are here, Miss Katie, do be seated and compose yourself.

KATIE
Begging your pardon, I cannot, sir. I've come to tell you --
(Can't go on)

WASHINGTON
Speak up, Miss Katie.

KATIE
Johnathan Hulme --

WASHINGTON
Yes?

KATIE
He's going to cross the river -- and meet Colonel Rall in Trenton!

LORD STIRLING
(Incredulous)
Colonel Rall?! Trenton?!

HAMILTON
We must alert the sentries immediately -- to shoot to kill --
(Rises)

WASHINGTON
No, wait, let him go. But alert all sentries to apprehend him, if he returns, and bring him to me at once.

(HAMILTON leaves)

WASHINGTON
(To STIRLING, who is also about to leave)
Come back, sir, Hamilton can handle this. Be seated.
(To Katie)
Miss Katie, it took uncommon courage to come to us with this word. We are aware that young Hulme means a great deal to you.

KATIE
Meant, sir.

WASHINGTON
Meant, then. Now, tell me, if you will, what reason Hulme offered for his trip on such an unlikely Christmas day.

KATIE
He said he had been summoned by Colonel Rall -- a matter of supplies.

LORD STIRLING
A matter of our movements, more likely.

KATIE
I'm afraid so, sir.

WASHINGTON
It's a risk we have to take. I've talked with your young man, Miss Katie. He thrives on theories, and fails to face facts, in this case, his needed brotherhood to these men freezing and starving on this side of the Delaware. Strange, how a man professes to think about the world, while overlooking those closest to him, to whom he already owes a debt of gratitude.

LORD STIRLING
In Trenton he'll see the brotherhood he's apparently thinking of -- the enemy.

WASHINGTON

And yet the very presence of an enemy often spurs good men to action. 'Tis the needed element to give wing to victory -- just as wind and gravity make it possible for birds to fly.

KATIE

(Bitterly)

But his actions add to the enemy's power -- and confidence.

WASHINGTON

Over-confidence, we pray. There is the soft spot in success. Here in our new land a strain of humility is the birthright of every American. It is the magic ingredient that counteracts arrogance, and, mixed with righteous confidence, it can pluck success from predicted failure.

LORD STIRLING

There is no humility in Trenton today, sir.

WASHINGTON

And that is our one chance! Power and pride intoxicate, like liquor.

LORD STIRLING

May the Hessians and their Tory hosts drink deeply of all three this Christmas night!

(HAMILTON returns)

HAMILTON

He must have made it, sir -- not a trace of him along the river.

KATIE

Oh, no -- oh, no --

WASHINGTON

If we could only know what Hulme will learn in Trenton . . .

<u>BLACKOUT</u>

ACT II

Scene 3

Drawing room of the Willoughby home -- Colonel Rall's headquarters in Trenton.

It is early afternoon of Christmas day.

The room is furnished with fine Queen Anne and Chippendale pieces.

Present, as the curtain rises, are COLONEL RALL, commander of the Hessian troops in Trenton, MR. and MRS. WILLOUGHBY, PRISCILLA PRIESTLY, Mrs. Willoughby's niece, and a young Hessian officer, HANS VON BERNHARDT, who has eyes only for Priscilla. PRISCILLA is singing a gay song, accompanying herself on the harpsichord. When she finishes, EVERYONE applauds.

RALL

Wonderful! Play more, Priscilla -- play some more! I want to dance.

(SHE does, and HE leads MRS. WILLOUGHBY in a whirling dance. When they have finished, HE drops, puffing, into a chair)

Thank you, my dear.

MRS. WILLOUGHBY

Ah, Colonel Rall, have I worn you out?

RALL

(Laughing)

Yah -- you have, Mrs. Willoughby -- something General Washington would like to accomplish, nein?

MRS. WILLOUGHBY

You must take advantage of our wonderful Bath Springs at Bristol.

RALL
To rejuvenate me?

MRS. WILLOUGHBY
I hear they work miracles.

MR. WILLOUGHBY
I was badly disappointed in them, myself.

COLONEL RALL
(Looking him up and down)
Even miracles have their limitations.

(MRS. WILLOUGHBY stifles a laugh)

WILLOUGHBY
(Deliberately ignoring the implication)
Has that been your experience, Colonel? Surely military history is full of --

MRS. WILLOUGHBY
(Cuts in)
Oh, Sturgis, you're always so serious! And I'm sure Colonel Rall knows all about military history! Guess who's coming to Bristol this spring!

PRISCILLA
Benjamin Franklin?

MRS. WILLOUGHBY
Oh, he's having much too good a time in Paris, I'm sure.

MR. WILLOUGHBY
George Washington?

PRISCILLA
Don't be silly. Generals don't have time to bathe.

COLONEL RALL
(Laughs)
Ladies, I can assure you that there will be no rebels taking baths at Bristol this spring.

MRS. WILLOUGHBY
I mean the Mrs. Drinker from Philadelphia.

PRISCILLA
Oh, Colonel, she entertains royally!

COLONEL RALL
Surely no better than your lovely aunt.

MRS. WILLOUGHBY
Thank you, Colonel, you're most galant.

COLONEL RALL
My dear lady, I learned manners at military school -- as well as military history.

MRS. WILLOUGHBY
You simply can't imagine the elegance Mrs. Drinker brings with her. . . the dinners, the parties, the galas . . .

WILLOUGHBY
Lucretia, you forget that Colonel Rall is a military man -- his duties may take him elsewhere.

COLONEL RALL
(Laughs)
Quite correct, Mr. Willoughby. War does now and then intrude on one's social activities.

PRISCILLA
(Looking at von Bernhardt)
How utterly dreadful!

(VON BERNHARDT squirms in embarrassment)

WILLOUGHBY
Is that why you're prolonging the war, Colonel?

COLONEL RALL
German officers, sir, believe that wars are meant to be won. It's the British point of view that's quite different.

MRS. WILLOUGHBY
What do you mean, Colonel?

COLONEL RALL
This war should be over! The British had those ridiculous rebels beaten and on the run two months ago. Washington was helpless at Newark and again at Brunswick. What happens? General Howe sends words to Lord Cornwallis: "Wait until we can join forces for the attack!" That takes seven days. So, the poor devils get safely across the Delaware, and dig in on the Pennsylvania shore.

MRS. WILLOUGHBY
Why did General Howe ask Cornwallis to wait?

COLONEL RALL
The explanation is not military -- it's female. For still having an army, the Americans owe a debt of gratitude to Mrs. Joshua Loring, a divorced lady from New York.

WILLOUGHBY
Nothing like that could happen in Trenton, could it, Colonel?

COLONEL RALL
(Laughs)
It's possible.

MRS. WILLOUGHBY
Women do have their part to play in war, don't they, Colonel?

COLONEL RALL
(Looking directly at her)
Emphatically ja, especially beautiful women. How do you think we captured General Charles Lee?
(Laughs loudly)

WILLOUGHBY
I do not believe General George Washington will give you such an opportunity.

PRISCILLA
(Giggles)
Perhaps that's because Mrs. Washington visits her husband frequently.

COLONEL RALL
Not this Christmas! We have reliable reports that his river headquarters must be used as a hospital.

MRS. WILLOUGBBY
I cannot understand why a man with a fine home, vast possessions, and a name of honor in the colonies should continue to go through the hell he's going through right now. Why does he do it?

WILLOUGHBY
Because, my dear, he believes in what he's fighting for, don't you agree, Colonel?

COLONEL RALL
Ja, and yet the man's no fool. He must know he can't win. As soon as the river freezes over, we'll cross and wipe his clumsy little band out of existence. Ah, but enough of war -- it's Christmas -- I want to dance some more, Priscilla.

(PRISCILLA starts playing again, and COLONEL RALL and MRS. WILLOUGHBY resume their dancing. After a few moments MAJOR VON LOSSBERG strides into the room. He is Rall's second-

in-command. Abruptly he interrupts
the dance)

COLONEL RALL
Now what is it, Lossberg?

VON LOSSBERG
A message from General Grant at New Brunswick, sir.

COLONEL RALL
(Irritably)
What does he say? What does he say?

VON LOSSBERG
He warns us to be on guard for a rebel attack.

COLONEL RALL
Bah! Three days ago he tells me that the rebel army does not exceed 8,000 naked men dying of hunger and cold. Now he says we should be on our guard for an attack? A contradiction, if I ever heard one.

VON LOSSBERG
There is always the possibility.

COLONEL RALL
On a night like this? Don't be a dummkopf, Lossberg. You worry too much. Come, have a drink. Enjoy yourself.

(LOSSBERG shakes his head doubtfully, crosses to get a drink, as a knock is heard on the door. LIEUT. VON BERNHARDT opens it. JOHNATHAN is standing on the threshold)

JOHNATHAN
Colonel Rall?

(VON BERNHARDT motions him in)

MRS. WILLOUGHBY
(Crossing)
Why, Johnathan Hulme, what a pleasant surprise!

JOHNATHAN
For me as well. I did not realize until directed here that I would find Colonel Rall's headquarters in your home.

MRS. WILLOUGHBY
Colonel Rall -- Major von Lossberg -- I do want you to meet my old friend, Johnathan Hulme. For more years than I care to remember we have dealt with the Hulmes, and his mother never misses sending delicious Christmas remembrances.

JOHNATHAN
I have brought none with me this year, I regret.

WILLOUGHBY
No matter. You are welcome at any time, Johnathan.

JOHNATHAN
I thank thee, sir.
(To Priscilla, bowing)
Miss Priscilla --

PRISCILLA
How are you, Johnathan? And how is Katie Gallagher?

JOHNATHAN
(Hesitating)
Well, thank thee.
(Turns to Rall)
Thee sent for me, sir.

RALL
(To von Lossberg)
I did?

VON LOSSBERG
This is the young gentleman who is supplying our troops.

RALL
Ach, ja -- from across the river.

JOHNATHAN
Yes, sir.

VON LOSSBERG
And how was your crossing?

JOHNATHAN
Most difficult, Major. I have never seen the ice so thick this early in the winter.

RALL
Hard to row, eh?

JOHNATHAN
Exceedingly dangerous. I wish to return as soon as possible.

VON LOSSBERG
Then let us proceed to business immediately.

WILLOUGHBY
(Starting to leave)
You will want privacy.

WILLOUGHBY (cont'd)
(Indicating others)
We'll retire to another room.

RALL
Nein, nein, it is not necessary to spoil the party. Proceed, Lossberg.

VON LOSSBERG
Mr. Hulme, you have been supplying our troops exceedingly well. Can you continue to do so?

JOHNATHAN
Of course.

VON LOSSBERG
And when we are across the river -- ?

JOHNATHAN
That I can do as well.

VON LOSSBERG
Will you also be able to supply whatever added troops we bring to this area?

JOHNATHAN
Within reason, sir.

RALL
You must have a remarkably productive farm, young man, and large, too, eh?

JOHNATHAN
It is good land for farming.

RALL
But I do not understand. Since you are on the rebel side of the river, how is it they do not take your food?

JOHNATHAN
They cannot pay.

RALL
Pay? This is war. In Washington's circumstance, I would simply take.

JOHNATHAN
I am a Quaker, sir, and therefore neutral. General Washington respects Quakers' neutrality.

(RALL laughs loudly)

RALL
Ach, a Quaker! God bless the Quakers -- one Quaker is worth a whole British regiment!

MRS. WILLOUGHBY
Imagine, Johnathan! A whole British regiment!

JOHNATHAN
I do not understand thee, sir.

RALL
That is just as well. Come have a drink, young man, and warm yourself.

JOHNATHAN
Thank thee, Colonel, but I do not drink.

RALL
What?!

VON LOSSBERG
It is the Quaker way, Colonel.

RALL
How can that be -- was not William Penn the head of the Quakers in this country?

JOHNATHAN
He was, sir.

RALL
Well, did he not drink, eh? I have heard about his brew house that still stands by the Delaware, downriver. I look forward to being there, shortly.

VON LOSSBERG
Within a week, Colonel.

RALL
(Continuing)
And did not Penn wear fine garments and live grandly in an English manor house, when Quakers are supposed to wear modest clothes and live frugally?

JOHNATHAN
It is not my place to judge or defend William Penn.

RALL
Yet you take his views on war --
(Bows mockingly)
We are most grateful.

JOHNATHAN

Grateful?

VON LOSSBERG

Of course. Without your assistance we would not be able to cope so well with the rigors of your harsh American winter.

JOHNATHAN

I still insist: I take no sides.

RALL

That's it exactly, eh, Lossberg? Mr. Hulme, you are a large factor in our defeating the clumsy rebels. Such views keep able-bodied men like yourself from the battlefield, as well as placing doubts in the minds of borderline colonists. Don't take offense, young man; your philosophy is good, in theory, but is it not parasitic in practice? Someone must fight for and protect the land in which you live as you wish. There are many inconsistencies in this Quaker business, nein?

JOHNATHAN

I cannot make thee understand --

RALL

Do you not break down rebel confidence? I confess I welcome it.

MRS. WILLOUGHBY

(Interrupting)

Colonel Rall, why do you continue to badger poor Johnathan? You cannot shake him from his convictions. Besides, you're spoiling the party.

JOHNATHAN

Forgive me, Mrs. Willoughby, I must answer the Colonel. Our view, sir, is that each man has a right to his own personal belief.

RALL

A fine theory, ja. And it may work when peace exists on earth. But for the next several centuries, a man must back his government for the common good when an enemy threatens.

MR. WILLOUGHBY

Prophecies are not like miracles, are they, Colonel -- they have no limitations, right?

MRS. WILLOUGHBY

Sturgis, this is Christmas, and we're neglecting our duties as hosts. We will need more wine, and I must see how things are progressing in the kitchen. Come with me, Priscilla. You too, Hans. You can help.

(THEY all leave, MR. WILLOUGHBY following reluctantly)

RALL

(Amused)

The wife orders -- the husband follows -- that is the American way.

(Laughs)

of course, she is a handsome woman --

JOHNATHAN

And Mr. Willoughby a fine husband.

RALL

We continue to misunderstand each other, my Quaker friend. That is not at all what I meant. But where there's a husband -- even a Mr. Willoughby -- I'm apt to hesitate.

JOHNATHAN

He's a very rich and influential man. A great collector of fine paintings, rare furnishings ------

RALL

That is the answer!

(Slaps his knee)

A man becomes a collector when he's too old to collect the only things worth gathering.

(JOHNATHAN looks at him in silence)

You are very young, Mr. Hulme. Have you never seen Mrs. Willoughby lean?

JOHNATHAN

Lean?

RALL

Lean. Every woman learns to lean, early in the game. She never wastes time leaning in high-necked daytime dresses. But put her in a low-necked blouse or a party frock and watch out -- or over. Why, when Lucretia leans forward to pick a card at whist -- aah!

VON LOSSBERG

I was wondering at your sudden interest in whist, Colonel!

RALL

Looking's no sin. This is a free country. That's what you're trying to prove, isn't it?

(A knock is heard)

Come in!

(A SENTRY enters, salutes, and hands VON LOSSBERG a note, which he reads, and passes on to RALL)

RALL

A man can't enjoy himself on Christmas. I won't read another verdammte note.

(He reads it)

More nonsense about an American attack. Hulme, I want to ask you some questions.

JOHNATHAN

I'm sorry, Colonel, I really must go.

RALL

Now, now -- one moment. Von Lossberg here expects spooks to jump out of attics, and rebels to surprise us here in Trenton. I've had three warnings about attacks tomorrow. I'm sure those country clods could not possibly reach us. You've been out in this unholy weather -- crossed the river as well -- in your opinion what are the chances their army will cross tonight?

JOHNATHAN

(Hesitates for some time before speaking)

General Washington's no fool, sir.

RALL

Exactly what I said!

VON LOSSBERG

(To Johnathan)

Go on, Hulme.

JOHNATHAN

(Still hesitating)

First, his men are in no condition to cross -- seven out of ten are sick and unfit for duty; second, even if they were in condition to cross, the river is not; third, if they did make it, thy Hessian pickets would warn thee in plenty of time.

RALL

(Drunk and boastful)

The best troops in America! Oh, I know what some say about them, but they judge by the rabble -- there's rabble in every command -- the ones that looted the library at Princeton and assaulted the young women at Raven Rock. Boys will be boys. And the girls did not mind too much, eh, Lossberg? Fighting for pay, people say. And why not? Was is as good a profession as any. Besides, these fellows in the fatherland were peasants being sweated to death by princes who took all the crops they raised. No wonder they join up. They come to us

as serfs. We turn them into soldiers -- the best troops in America!
(Starts off)
Lucretia, the wine! A game of whist!
(HE exits)

(VON LOSSBERG has been worried by Rall's rambling. JOHNATHAN starts toward the door)

JOHNATHAN
I must be on my way.

VON LOSSBERG
Would it not be better to stay the night, so that we can work out the details of your shipments?

JOHNATHAN
That is not necessary. They will be ready when thee wishes.

VON LOSSBERG
You seem to be in a great hurry.

JOHNATHAN
I want to make McKonkey's Ferry by seven, Major. It will take me two hours to get there and at least an hour to cross -- if I get across --

VON LOSSBERG
Your hurry could not by any chance be a desire to report on our situation to General Washington, could it?

JOHNATHAN
Major Von Lossberg, I have told thee my position many times over. General Washington respects it, and Colonel Rall accepts it. I do not believe that there is anything further we need to discuss.

(VON LOSSBERG motions to the SENTRY, who blocks the entrance door)

VON LOSSBERG
You do not think me stupid enough to allow you to leave with the information you have collected here today. You talk too much, my young friend.

JOHNATHAN
(Increasingly annoyed)
I have told thee nothing that thee did not already know.

VON LOSSBERG
Perhaps. But despite what Colonel Rall believes, and what you pretend to believe --

JOHNATHAN

Pretend?!

VON LOSSBERG

Yes, pretend! I am not fooled. I believe the rebels are preparing an immediate attack on Trenton, and you were sent here to make us believe otherwise.

(Sarcastically)

And I had thought Quakers to be free of guile, and you one of the most naive of the lot.

JOHNATHAN

(Angrily)

It is obvious I have been, sir.

VON LOSSBERG

(To Sentry)

This man is under arrest.

(The SENTRY places a restraining hand on JOHNATHAN, who breaks away violently)

What?! You show fight? And I had thought all Quakers cowards -- and you a coward like the rest.

(To sentry)

This man is under arrest!

(SENTRY again grabs Johnathan)

I have the utmost contempt for you and your kind.

(Once again JOHNATHAN pulls away from the sentry. Then he whirls VON LOSSBERG around, so they're face to face, and knocks him down. Before von Lossberg and the sentry can recover, JOHNATHAN is out the door and away)

VON LOSSBERG

(Rising -- to sentry)

After him, you idiot! Stop him! Stop him!

(The SENTRY rushes out. The general commotion brings on COLONEL RALL, his arm about MRS. WILLOUGHBY's waist. They are followed by MR. WILLOUGHBY. VON LOSSBERG is recovering as non-chalantly as possible, under the circumstances)

RALL

What's all the noise? What happens?

VON LOSSBERG

Your simple Quaker is not quite so simple. I knew I could provoke him into showing his true colors.

(Feeling his jaw)

He has a strong right arm.

MRS. WILLOUGHBY

Johnathan -- struck you?! But he's a Quaker!

RALL

(Laughs)

Aha -- a fighting Quaker! Eh, Lossberg?

VON LOSSBERG

Have no fear, Colonel. He won't get far.

RALL

Maybe Washington will send over one of their new flags tomorrow morning to bury him in. Come, Lossberg, you need a drink. It's Christmas night! The war can wait! Enjoy yourself!

(RALL goes off, his arm still about MRS. WILLOUGHBY, both laughing gaily. VON LOSSBERG follows reluctantly)

(MR. WILLOUGHBY is alone. Face immobile, his eyes follow the others. Then he turns toward the door, and a smile comes on his face)

MR. WILLOUGHBY

Good luck, Johnathan -- God be with you.

CURTAIN

ACT II

Scene 4

Quickly the lights fade up to reveal GENERAL WASHINGTON alone in the tent we have seen in Scene 2. He is kneeling, and silent. After a moment or two, he speaks.

WASHINGTON

Father, who knows us all -- look down this night upon our motley army assembled here -- we do not have the costly means to win this battle -- not guns, nor food, nor clothes. Pray give us courage in such great amount 'twill make up for the lack of earthly things. The weather You have sent to us this night -- freezing and foul as weather e'er can be -- must have some purpose -- else why would it now be sent to dim our hopes? If it makes us doubt whether this crossing can be made, it must give assurance to the enemy that it cannot. Is that the sign You give for us to move?

(Sound of wind and rain)

You speak -- and I can now decide -- we'll cross the Delaware this Christmas night and turn the tide toward victory in this war. In God we trust. Thy will be done. Amen.

BLACKOUT

END OF ACT II

ACT III

Scene 1

The point of embarkation for the crossing. It is 6 P.M. on Christmas night and very dark. One or two small fires are seen, revealing, as the fire-light flickers, small groups of SOLDIERS gathered around them. It is snowing and windy; and we hear the sound of ice crashing against the boats, which are in the early stages of being loaded. The stirring beat of muffled drums mingles with the other sounds. After a few moments horses' hoofs are heard along the river banks, at first in the distance, then closer, until a spotlight picks up the rider, who has dismounted. It is WASHINGTON. HAMILTON approaches.

WASHINGTON
Captain Hamilton, has there been any word on Johnathan Hulme?

HAMILTON
None as yet, General.

WASHINGTON
(Musing)
Could I have been wrong in not restricting his movements?

HAMILTON
I'm afraid, sir, he may have ruined our hopes of surprising the enemy at Trenton.

WASHINGTON
Captain, Johnathan Hulme is not a trained military observer -- and besides he professes neutrality.

HAMILTON
We cannot be certain of that. He must have realized something was taking place -- he lives so close to our camp.

WASHINGTON
I might wish that I had ordered the Hulmes away, as with the others. But there is no time for hindsight now. In any event, I had no cause to hold him.

WASHINGTON (Cont'd)
(Quickly)
Where is General Gates? I expected him long before this.

HAMILTON
He should have been here, sir. And no word from Colonel Cadwalader at Bristol . . .

WASHINGTON
No, and I am most anxious for that, as well. He knows it is essential to our plan that he cross at Bristol and distract the Hessian forces at Mount Holly and Black Horse in Jersey.

HAMILTON
What is the latest estimate of General von Donop's command?

WASHINGTON
We know he has fifteen hundred Hessian Grenadiers, Jaegers and 22nd Highlanders between Bordentown and Burlington. Without Cadwalader's diversion at Bristol to draw them southward, they can reinforce Rall at Trenton. That would mean disaster for us.

(Another horse is heard in the distance. The rider appears, dismounted. It is Washington's aide, COLONEL TENCH TILGHMAN)

WASHINGTON
Where's Gates?

TILGHMAN
(Hands WASHINGTON a note)
This is from General Gates, sir.

WASHINGTON
I expected him, and not his signature!

TILGHMAN
Sorry, sir. He told me to inform you that he is on his way to Baltimore.

WASHINGTON
(Incredulous)
On his way to Baltimore? I cannot believe it! Doesn't he realize I need him here?
(He reads the note, crumples it in disgust, and puts it in his pocket)
Summer soldiers occur at any rank, gentlemen. What word from General Ewing?

TILGHMAN
None, sir.

WASHINGTON
(Impatiently)
He must cross directly from Pennsylvania to Trenton on the Jersey side. He has orders to make his crossings three hours after we complete ours from here -- for we have nine miles to march south to meet with him, to arrive together at the center of Trenton. We should not leave until we have word he is in position to cross. Captain Hamilton, has Colonel Glover conferred since sundown with McKonkey, the ferryman?

HAMILTON
Conferred is hardly the word, sir. McKonkey has soundly cursed Colonel Glover. Says the army's suddenly full of experts on wind and river -- telling him, McKonkey, what to do -- a man who has lived here at his Inn beside the Delaware all his life, and run his ferry on the river through many winters. Major Blount and Colonel Stark had a go at it, too, but McKonkey's mad as a wet hen and uncooperative. I think you had better talk with him, General, and alone.

WASHINGTON
Very well.
(To Tilghman)
Will you ask him please to come and see me?

TILGHMAN
Yes, sir.
(Exits)

WASHINGTON
(Smiles)
The Irish-Americans are a temperamental lot, no doubt about it.

HAMILTON
Aye, but great patriots, that is certain.

WASHINGTON
So are they all -- Irish, Polish, Scotch, English -- they are all Americans -- those who fight with us here.

HAMILTON
Even the Germans, sir.

WASHINGTON
Indeed. Because the Hessians fight against us, there are those who assume the German-Americans are not behind our cause. But I know that in my whole state of Virginia, there has been only one case of disloyalty by a German-American. No matter what their former nationality, these men are all Americans bound by the same purpose -- freedom for all men.

(TILGHMAN returns with MCKONKEY, the ferryman)

WASHINGTON
Good evening, sir.

MCKONKEY
(Surly)
Evenin'.

WASHINGTON
McKonkey, I need the advice of the saltiest seaman on the Delaware.

MCKONKEY
You're the first man what thinks I'm worthy of an opinion.
(Angrily)
And we don't have any salt in the Delaware!

WASHINGTON
(Amused, turns to the two officers)
Will you gentlemen leave us?

(HAMILTON and TILGHMAN smile and leave)

MCKONKEY
(Muttering)
Salt . . .

WASHINGTON
Come, McKonkey, allow a tired man a small joke.

MCKONKEY
How should I know it's a joke?! Me inn's been filled this whole day with officers who think they know all the answers to this river's problems. An' that Colonel Glover's more'n I can take sir -- a struttin' peacock of a man he is -- and a mighty small one at that.

WASHINGTON
McKonkey, Colonel Glover served me well at the East River in late August, and by his skill made the dangerous retreat from Long Island possible.

MCKONKEY
That may be, sir, but, by God, a man gets tired hearing about the East River and fog. We're on the Delaware, with heavy ice and snow -- 'tis a bit different.

WASHINGTON
Exactly. Along with dangerous currents and rocks.

MCKONKEY
Aye, and I'm the one that knows where they are!

WASHINGTON
That, McKonkey, is why I'm counting on <u>you</u> to advise us on our crossing.

(Suddenly MCKONKEY's anger is deflated)

MCKONKEY
Well, now, General, that's the first good sense I've heard this day. Thank ye, sir.

WASHINGTON
What length of time do you think the crossing operation will take tonight?

MCKONKEY
Ain't you assumin' something, General? As I see it, the question afore that is: "Can a passage be made on such a river?"

WASHINGTON
It must be done, and so I put aside <u>all</u> other questions . . . No, I suppose there is one other inquiry that need be answered. Can we load cannon and horses on the boats in this storm?

MCKONKEY
General, to any other man, in any other war, I would say "no" to that. I don't need to tell ye how horses fear the wind and noise, let alone the movin' boats. Now, I've been loadin' animals on ferries all me lifetime and I'd never attempt it. 'Twill take some mighty fancy plannin' by the best judge of horseflesh we have on the river bank -- and that's you, General. You count on me for the river? I count on you for the horses.

WASHINGTON
If I know horses at all, we'll have a struggle even backing them onto the boats.

MCKONKEY
Are yer men strong enough to handle 'em?

WASHINGTON
A good question -- sick, weary and half frozen as most of them are -- God knows I've tried everything to help them --

MCKONKEY
They know that, sir, and knowin' it's important. I reckon them what's here will find the strength.

WASHINGTON
If humanly possible, these men will make it. The cowards fled during our retreat through the Jerseys, and the fancy ones have found other places to be just now. These twenty-four hundred aren't with us for the uniforms or the glory, because they're used to mocking laughter, and not cheers. These men are here because they believe in what they're fighting for -- the United States of America.

MCKONKEY
Then they'll make it, sir.

WASHINGTON
I pray they will.
(Shakes his head)
I've known the Delaware as a gentle stream, and I've seen it in winters, but I've never before seen it like this.

MCKONKEY
Nor I, who've lived by it and on it all me life.

WASHINGTON
Still, McKonkey, we must get this army across this river tonight.

MCKONKEY
We will, General, we will.

WASHINGTON
(After a moment)
Are General Mercer and Lord Stirling at your Inn?

MCKONKEY
That they are, gettin' warmed up a bit.

WASHINGTON
They'll need all the warming they can get. I'll see them there.
(Calls out)
Sentry! Keep alert for the Tory Quaker, Johnathan Hulme!
(HE exits)

(Alone, MCKONKEY hears a sound of "sst" coming from behind a bush. He looks around, then hears it again)

MCKONKEY
Who be it, now? Speak up.

MINNIE
(Whisper)
It's me -- Minnie O'Shaughnessy, you old jackass. Shut up -- or someun'll hear me.

MCKONKEY
What are you doin' here?

MINNIE
I tried to tell her, I did. I said if General Washington found us he'd -- he'd -- now that I come to think of it, what in hell would he do?

(THEY laugh)

She was set on helpin' here, this night, she said --

MCKONKEY
Now who be "she"?

MINNIE
Why, Katie Gallagher, you dolt!

MCKONKEY
Sure, I might hev known. A spunky one, that!

MINNIE
She sez that this night's goin' to decide whether we have a new nation. But I think 'twill also decide somethin' fer her!

MCKONKEY
What d'ye mean by that?

MINNIE
Whether the man she loves is a traitor, or not.

MCKONKEY
Ye mean young Hulme?

MINNIE
Who else?

MCKONKEY
Sure, an' is there any question?

MINNIE
I guess Katie knows that same as you do, but knowin' don't make it no easier!

MCKONKEY
Ah, 'e deserves whatever 'e gets.

MINNIE
As a patriot, she agrees with ye, I'm sure -- but as a woman -- it ain't so easy.

MCKONKEY
Get along, Minnie, ye talk too much, like all of 'em.
(Pointing to inn)
They're in there, by the fire, sayin' jist how to cross an ice-filled river. Not one among 'em -- including that Glover -- what knows as much as General Washington or meself.

MINNIE
What would General Washington know about ice? Ain't 'e from the South?

MCKONKEY
(In disgust)
Don't ye know the Potomac River in Virginia gets ice on it? The General's lived by rivers all his life -- the Rappahannock as a boy and the Potomac ever since. He kin handle boats in winter ice as well as summer squall.

MINNIE
That ain't what I been hearin' ye say.

MCKONKEY
That was afore we talked. A real river man, that one!

MINNIE
(With a twinkle)
Takes one good river man to judge another, I guess.

MCKONKEY
(Warming)
I'll wager there ain't another man here exceptin' me what's had such experience in handlin' boats in an ice floe.

MINNIE
Is that so now? And how d'ye know all that?

MCKONKEY
Why, I heard that one night when the General was a young lad, carrying some military messages to the governor at Williamsburg, 'e an' another feller tried to cross a half-froze river -- the "Nongahela" -- somethin' like that -- out in the western part of our colony.

MINNIE
So what happened?

MCKONKEY
Stop interruptin' me, will ye? I'm tryin' to tell ye! They was polin' the raft, an' the oars stuck in the ice, pullin' 'um right off into the water!

MINNIE
My God, he could've drowned!

MCKONKEY
Sure, and we'd've been stuck with those experts in there!

MINNIE
Or we wouldn't be fightin' fer our freedom at all!

MCKONKEY
Ye're right there!

MINNIE
McKonkey, what happened out there on that river?

MCKONKEY
(Throws it away)
Oh, Washington's a good swimmer with strong arms, and he managed to right the raft, pull hisself back on an' save the other feller as well.

MINNIE
Thank God!

MCKONKEY
We kin all thank God this night. If any man can get our army across the Delaware, George Washington's the one to do it. Sure, if it warn't for him, I'd tell the whole bloomin' lot of 'em to go to hell. But fer the sake of that one man, I'll go along.

MINNIE
D'ye know he says his prayers -- off by himself, alone 'afore every battle?

MCKONKEY
He'd better pray hard this night.

MINNIE
McKonkey, what's that poundin' noise?

MCKONKEY
My men, tryin' to scrape the ice off the boats. . . Come on inside, Minnie, I'd like to treat ye to a bit of bracin' this raw night!

MINNIE
Don't mind if I do, Mac, don't mind if I do.

(THEY exit. KATIE appears, wrapped in heavy clothes, and carrying a pewter dipper. With her is a SOLDIER, carrying a large pot filled with steaming liquid. SHE passes from

group to group, handing each of the soldiers in turn a dipper-full of the hot drink. The MEN show their appreciation, and finally ONE speaks)

SOLDIER
Ye were stationed at the Thompson-Neely house, wuz ye not?

KATIE
I was.

SOLDIER
Miss, would ye mind telling us how Captain Moore is farin'? I've heard rumors, but I want the truth.

KATIE
(Hesitates)
The truth I hate to give you. He died this very morning.

SOLDIER
Aye, I was afraid of that! He was the best -- always thinkin' of us, he wuz.

ANOTHER SOLDIER
Where's he buried?

KATIE
Along the river bank, with the others. That's as he'd have wanted it.

SOLDIER
God rest their souls! Poor devils -- they'll lie here beside the Delaware never knowin' whether we make it or not.

ANOTHER SOLDIER
But then neither do we --

KATIE
Go on with ye -- ye do know, too -- look deep within your hearts. You'll cross the river, to a man, march on Trenton, and take the town by surprise.

SOLDIER
What makes you so sure?

KATIE
My heart. It's never failed me yet. You can count on it.

(She moves on to another group, as WASHINGTON and HAMILTON come on from the inn)

WASHINGTON
Miss Katie, I thought you understood my orders -- you were not to be here.

KATIE
I wanted to do what I could, General -- the men are so cold --

WASHINGTON
Very well, but we will be leaving soon.

(KATIE moves on to another group, out of sight. Sound of hoofs and a COURIER enters)

COURIER
Message from General Ewing, sir.

WASHINGTON
I await this word eagerly.
(Takes the note, reads it, and looks glum)
Tell the General -- there has been no change in our plans, as yet.

COURIER
Yes, sir.
(Exits)

WASHINGTON
(To Hamilton)
Ewing says that the ice condition opposite Trenton is worsening, that he feels sure the appointed hour for his embarkation -- 3 A.M. -- will find a crossing there quite impossible for him.

HAMILTON
Can we carry it off without his reinforcements?

WASHINGTON
I was counting on their taking a position in Trenton south of Assunpink Creek so as to close the avenue of escape for the Hessians after we attack the town from the west. Still, we have no choice. Alone, or not, the crossing must be made. Tell Stirling about this message, Captain, if you will, but don't let him move from that fire at the Inn. If he attempts to come to me out here, I'll not see him. He is suffering a great deal from that devilish rheumatism.

HAMILTON
(Starting to leave)
He's in great pain, I know.

(TILGHMAN enters, and hands
WASHINGTON another note)

TILGHMAN
From General Cadwalader at Bristol, sir.

WASHINGTON
(Eagerly)
Thank you.
(Reads aloud)
"It is quite impossible to make a crossing at Bristol and the scheduled diversion in New Jersey."
(Folds paper slowly)
Colonel Tilghman, send a dispatch to the general -- we plan to proceed as scheduled. Tell him still to attempt whatever he can to divert the enemy from Trenton.

TILGHMAN
If you'll forgive me, General, should we not, at this point, review the entire situation and decide whether we shouldn't abandon the crossing and return to quarters here?

WASHINGTON
The safer road, perhaps, but one which has no ending. Remember our battle cry, "Victory or death"? That would mean the latter. If not death to ourselves, then to our cause. I made a promise on that battle cry, Captain Hamilton, do you recall?

HAMILTON
Very well, sir.

WASHINGTON
Captain Moore's not here to know it now, but the word "death" will be omitted!

TILGHMAN
I believe in gambling, sir, but I do count on some odds, however small. And where can we find victory in this night?

WASHINGTON
I know not where -- but find it we must. Carry on, gentlemen.

(THEY exit. WASHINGTON stands alone
by the bank. KATIE appears, and
crosses to him)

KATIE
General Washington, I should not ask, and yet I must -- have you any word on Johnathan?

WASHINGTON
None, as yet. But we shall soon, I trust. I know it was not an easy decision for you, Miss Katie, to warn us of Johnathan's movements this morning.

KATIE

No, it was not. To find the courage I thought of all the difficult decisions you must make, General. In spite of my own worries, I wish that I could give you some word of encouragement, however small.

WASHINGTON

You are, my girl, by everything you do.

KATIE

Was ever a man faced with a more difficult decision?

WASHINGTON

(A gentle smile)

This is one time I wish I had more years than forty-four, Miss Katie. General Gates, General Lee, General Putnam are not here -- Lord Stirling is too ill to trouble now. God give me wisdom.

KATIE

He will -- God is with us.

WASHINGTON

In war both sides so proclaim. I think God is not on the side of any one nation -- only on the side of truth and right.

KATIE

Well, it's truth and right we're fighting for, General -- a nation planned, for the first time in all the world, to give every man the right to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness -- surely God's with that.

WASHINGTON

He must be, or there is no God in Heaven.

BLACKOUT

ACT III

Scene 2

A half hour later. It is still windy and snowing. The frightened neighing of horses, the shouts of men, puncture the sounds of movement. WASHINGTON is standing on the bank, surrounded by LORD STIRLING, CAPTAIN HAMILTON, COLONEL TILGHMAN, and COLONEL KNOX, artillery commander.

WASHINGTON

Gentlemen, I am making changes in the order of our crossing. Since Cadwalader's first division cannot cross at Bristol and it now appears unlikely that Ewing's second division can cross at Trenton, obviously all depends on my third division here. Colonel Knox, is your artillery ready?

KNOX

All ready, sir.

WASHINGTON

All eighteen field pieces?

KNOC

Yes, General, ready to move.

WASHINGTON

The embarkation will begin not with artillery, but with a company of foot soldiers to protect our landing.

KNOX

Yes, sir.

HAMILTON

(Calls)
General Greene.

VOICE

(Offstage)
Yes, Captain.

HAMILTON

General Washington wishes one of your companies to embark first to stand guard on the Jersey shore.

VOICE

Yes, sir. Company A, into the boats.

(Sounds of orders and confusion of voices)

WASHINGTON

Good. Gather around, gentlemen.

(As the OFFICERS gather, STIRLING moves with obvious difficulty)

WASHINGTON

(To Stirling)

So you're still determined to cross with us this night.

STIRLING

Determination's a trait I've caught from you.

WASHINGTON

Very well, sir. I would not deny any true American the honor we will share in the hours to come.

(Pause)

To repeat our present plan briefly. Our third division has been divided in two columns, one under General Greene, the other under General Sullivan. Once across, General Greene will travel to Trenton by the Pennington Road. In his column, embarking now, are the Virginia Continentals of General Stephen's brigade, serving as the advance party. Next, General Mercer's brigade, chiefly Continentals from Connecticut, Maryland and Massachusetts.

(To Stirling)

General Stirling, you will be in command of the reserves, with men from two Virginia regiments, Haslet's Delawares and a Pennsylvania rifle regiment. In advance of General Sullivan's column will be General Roche de Fernoy with men chosen from the Pennsylvania German regiment and one additional Pennsylvania brigade, who will march toward Trenton by the river road. Next are the brigades of General St. Clair, Colonel Glover, and General Sargent, with New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Connecticut and New York troops. St. Clair's will be in reserve. The horses and artillery follow.

TILGHMAN

General, McKonkey estimates the storm will cause at least three hours' delay in completing the crossing. This means it will be past 3 A. M. before we can start the march toward Trenton, and after daylight before the two columns can meet.

WASHINGTON

True, we can therefore no longer count on surprising the enemy in darkness. What we lose in time we must make up in skill and courage. Gentlemen, let us proceed.

(WASHINGTON leads the OFFICERS off. KATIE and MINNIE appear)

KATIE

(To Minnie)

Hear them, Minnie. Their voices tell how far they are from home. The Boston Blueblood and the Virginia farm boy are as one on this night -- joined in our cause, which is just as it should be, for ours is the cause of all men -- of all station.

MINNIE

Look at the banners, would ye? Can ye imagine carryin' that big, faded blue on a night like this.

(Reads)

"For post--er -- er"

KATIE

"Posterity."

MINNIE

"I bleed." Sure, what does that mean?

KATIE

Posterity means the young ones who will come when we are gone. See on that banner there's a pine tree, a New England pine, that's the New Hampshire 13th Regiment. A soldier has fallen wounded in battle 'neath the tree. He has one hand upon his heart. With the other he points to the two youngers standing nearby, and so the words, "For posterity I bleed."

MINNIE

Touchin' it is -- and think of these lads, all so far away from their homes on Xmas night.

KATIE

I think of them all, Minnie -- yet my heart fears for one. Oh, Minnie, Minnie, they'll shoot him before he ever makes this shore.

MINNIE

(Putting her arms around Katie)

But not to kill 'im, dearie. Sure they'll be wantin' to ask questions.

KATIE

(Controlling her tears)

But the sentries are aroused -- they'll shoot to kill, regardless of orders. I cannot bear to think of Johnathan wounded, drowning -- oh, Minnie --

(WASHINGTON leads the OFFICERS off. ALFRED and KATIE appear)

ALFRED

(Pointing)

Hear them, Katie! Their voices tell how that they are [illegible]. The [illegible] and the Virginia [illegible] are [illegible] on this night -- joined in our cause, which is just as it should be, for ours is the cause of all men -- of all station.

KATIE

Look at the banner, Alfred! Can ye imagine anything that big, [illegible] on a night like this.

(Reads)

"For posterity -- I"

ALFRED

"Posterity."

KATIE

"I bleed." Alfie, what does that mean?

ALFRED

Posterity means the young, ones who will come after us [illegible]. Look at that banner -- there's a pine tree, a New England [illegible], [illegible] the New Hampshire [illegible] Regiment. A soldier [illegible] fallen wounded [illegible] beneath the tree. He has one hand upon his breast. With the other he points to the two [illegible] standing nearby, and to the words: "For posterity I bleed."

KATIE

Wonderful to [illegible] -- and think of those lads, all so far away from their homes on that night.

ALFRED

I think of them all, Katie -- [illegible] Dr. [illegible], Katie, they'll meet him before the year [illegible] this year.

KATIE

(Turning her eyes toward [illegible])

But not to kill 'im, Alfie. Sure they'll be wantin' to ask questions.

ALFRED

([illegible] her [illegible])

But the [illegible] are armed -- they'll shoot to kill, regardless [illegible]. I cannot bear to think of [illegible] wounded, bleeding -- oh, Katie --

MINNIE
Hush, my girl. This is no time to lose that stout heart of yers.

KATIE
I fear I've already lost it.

(Sound of rifle shots)

Dear God, it must be Johnathan.
(Runs toward bank)

(Sounds of excitement, loud voices and commands are heard before JOHNATHAN is pushed up the bank, a SOLDIER at each side and one at his rear, holding a rifle at his back. His clothing indicates rough handling. HE is wounded and holding his right hand to a wound in his left shoulder)

KATIE
Johnathan!

JOHNATHAN
(Speaks with difficulty)
Katie, I must see General Washington at once. There is no time to talk to thee now.

KATIE
Yes, yes. But wounds won't wait. Let me help you. Our sentries have given you an ugly wound . . .

MINNIE
For good reason!

FIRST SENTRY
We didn't hit him, ma'am -- only fired to make him halt.

JOHNATHAN
'Twas Hessian pickets gave me this!

KATIE
Hessian pickets? I don't understand.

SECOND SENTRY
Come on, Quaker, the General wants to see you.

(THEY take HIM off. Casting puzzled glances after Johnathan, KATIE moves toward a group by one of the fires,

and kneels by a prostrate soldier)

SOLDIER
Miss, don't touch that sorry mess that once wuz feet. They're past all feelin' -- I can't seem to make them move.

KATIE
Minnie, let us get this man inside. I'll tend to him in there.

(THEY help HIM offstage)

(SAUTTER comes rushing up the bank)

SAUTTER
(To a soldier)
Boy, have you seen a comely woman hereabouts.

SOLDIER
You mean Miss Katie? She just helped a man to the inn.

SAUTTER
No, the other one. Older she is, and wiser, too, and charm? She's got enuf fer ten. Where is she now?

SOLDIER
Oh, her. She went along with Katie.

SAUTTER
I've got to speak me piece before I leave.
(He runs toward the inn, calling)
Minnie, Minnie!

(After a moment HE returns, pulling a reluctant MINNIE)

MINNIE
But I should be 'elpin' Katie.

SAUTTER
In a minute, girl -- I'll let you go. Minnie, I can't leave without tellin' you somethin' I been thinkin' these past weeks.

MINNIE
Out with it, Sautter.

SAUTTER
Smart as you are, you know it well -- already. 'Tis this. If I get back -- and only God knows if I will -- I'd like to know that I'll come back to you.

MINNIE

(Archly)

Oh, would you, now?

SAUTTER

(Solemnly)

I have great admiration for the way you handle everything from pies to plasters. Will ye marry me, Minnie?

MINNIE

Well, now, I'd never thought to take a fourth . . .

SAUTTER

And why not?

MINNIE

No good reason why not. No good reason at all -- exceptin' somethin' we've never talked much of -- religion. Now I'm a Roman Catholic and ye've never told me yer faith.

(Voice calls "Sergeant Sautter!")

SAUTTER

What's it matter? I must go -- say yes, Minnie, say yes . . .

MINNIE

All right, all right. Sure I'll be waitin' fer ye -- if ye get back.

SAUTTER

(Gives her a quick kiss)

I'll be back!

(Dashes away)

MINNIE

(Calls)

Sautter! Give me yer answer! What faith be ye?

SAUTTER

(Off)

Me? A Lutheran!

MINNIE

Jesus, Mary and Joseph! Here I go agin!

(JOHNATHAN appears over the bank)

JOHNATHAN

Minnie, where's Katie?

MINNIE

What would ye be wantin' with her?

JOHNATHAN
I would bid her goodbye.

MINNIE
Goodbye, man? Ye jest got here.

JOHNATHAN
But I cross again with the army.

MINNIE
With the army?!
(Softens)
She's in the inn. I'll send her out.

(While he waits for Katie, JOHNATHAN paces. WASHINGTON appears with HAMILTON)

WASHINGTON
(Calls over river bank)
Men -- I've told you -- watch those horses -- they must be loaded backwards into the wind. If they see the ice and feel the wind stinging their eyes, we'll never get them loaded.
(Turns to Hamilton)
A good thing these Durham boats are sturdy. Daniel Bray and Colonel Humpton did their jobs well in gathering them. We've boats aplenty, but the Durhams are by far the best -- used as they are to hauling iron. They're steady as any craft could be in this weather.

(THEY move on, as KATIE appears. She goes sobbing into Johnathan's arms)

JOHNATHAN
Ah, to hold thee close again. I scarce feel the cold -- only thy beating heart beneath thy cloak.

KATIE
Johnathan!

(THEY kiss)

KATIE
Let me tend that wound.

JOHNATHAN
It is not serious, Katie -- and I must go join our men.

KATIE
"Our men"?

LIBRARY

JOHNATHAN
They fight for me as well as thee, my Katie.

KATIE
Johnathan, I don't understand --

JOHNATHAN
My crossing to Trenton was meaningful for me. I learned much about myself.

KATIE
(Holding him tight)
Oh, Johnathan!

JOHNATHAN
I have just reported to General Washington. My information will warn him where the Hessian pickets wait. And now I must hurry, because I cross again -- with the army.

KATIE
Have you not done anough?

JOHNATHAN
Thee asks me that?
(Smiling)
Shame on my patriot.

KATIE
Love of one's country wavers in the face of danger for one's love -- but I know how you feel. 'Tis so startling a change, Johnathan --

JOHNATHAN
'Tis not a sudden thing. I've been thrashing it out within myself for weeks. As I rode into Trenton today, I was not sure just what I had in mind -- warning the Hessians of some plan afoot, or wavering in my decision to help the cause. While at Rall's headquarters, the answer came to me, and as I rode back tonight along the Jersey bank, it was as though the sleet beat facts into my stubborn head.

KATIE
My darling Johnathan.

JOHNATHAN
My Quaker thoughts on the brotherhood of men are fine and right. But I forgot that the brotherhood of men is best nurtured under a strong, free government -- one dedicated to the rights of men and their responsibilities. Never in the world has any nation been conceived under such a Declaration as ours.

JOHNATHAN (Cont'd)

(Pause)

And so tonight I made a crossing of my own. And I go to fight with Washington, joining those other Quaker patriots who fight at his side -- Timothy Matlack, Colonel Nixon, General Greene, and all the others.

(WASHINGTON and HAMILTON enter upstage, Hamilton carrying a furled flag)

KATIE

I love you, Johnathan.

JOHNATHAN

Then think thee not, June is a long way off?

KATIE

Far, far too long. The New Year's long enough!

JOHNATHAN

I must go, Katie, darling. I'll be back -- I'll be back.

(HE kisses her and dashes off)

(WASHINGTON crosses to Katie, and puts his arm around her shoulder)

WASHINGTON

Aye, he'll be back, and I pray every man here with him. This I do feel -- for God is on the Delaware tonight.

(WASHINGTON now turns to Hamilton)

Captain, spread out the flag -- let us see for the first time the new flag -- our very own.

(HAMILTON unfurls the flag)

And so, Captain James Moore, we cross -- to victory!

(HAMILTON, carrying the unfurled flag, follows WASHINGTON off, as KATIE watches, a lone figure left behind)

(The noises of the embarkation grow fainter. Several lights appear in the darkness, indicating the progress of the boats, the lights blinking faintly as the curtain comes down)

<u>FINAL CURTAIN</u>

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